

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

VOL. 33.—No. 2.] LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1821. [Price 6d.

Published every Saturday Morning, at Six o' Clock.

TO THE  
STOCKING-WEAVERS  
OF  
LEICESTERSHIRE, NOTTING-  
HAMSHIRE and DERBYSHIRE.

*On the subject of their present  
turn-out; and on the real causes  
of their distress.*

Kensington, 13 April, 1821.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW-SUFFERERS,

That, in this state of "national  
"glory," while, as the Speaker  
told the king to his face, "this  
"mighty Empire is proudly re-  
"posing in the arms of peace;"  
that, under these circumstances,  
and while, as we have it from the  
same high authority, this mighty  
Empire "has leisure to attend to  
"her own internal affairs, and to  
"adopt efficient measures to in-  
"sure her own prosperity;"  
while this is the case, and that,  
too, under a Constitution, which,  
as we are told by "the venerable  
"sages on the Bench," is "the  
"envy of surrounding nations  
"and the admiration of the  
"world," it is, say they what  
they will, a little odd, that *sixteen  
thousand* workmen, in one single  
trade, should be going about the  
country begging their bread.

Such a thing could not be, with-  
out *blame* being justly imputable  
*somewhere*. That blame must  
rest on the Workmen themselves,  
on the Masters, or on Govern-  
ment, that is to say, the *Parlia-  
ment*; for, let it always be borne  
in mind, that without the assent  
of the Parliament the Ministers  
can do nothing.

I have before me a statement  
of your case and of your com-  
plaints, entitled "*the Question at  
"issue between the frame-work  
"knitters and their employers,"*  
which statement is signed "Hu-  
"MANUS." If it had been signed  
"FOLLY," the name would, in  
my opinion, have been more cor-  
respondent with the matter of the  
work; for I have seldom met  
with, in so short a compass, so  
much real ignorance; so many  
false notions; so much absurdity  
under the guise of reasoning. It  
is my wish to expose the errors  
of this publication, and to lay  
before you a description of the  
real causes of your present misery,  
the existence of which is but too  
notorious, and sorrow for which  
no man more sincerely feels than  
I do. I am always prone to take

D

part with the weak against the strong; and, if ever there was a man, who, more than all other men, had a partiality for the *industrious*, in all the callings of life, that man am I. I have contended, and I always contend, that we have no reason to confine the word *learning* to the knowledge of languages, or to book-knowledge of any sort. The able man at the loom is *learned* in his calling; and so is the able hedger in his. I never have "judged a man by his clothes;" and I can truly say, that, as far as I am influenced by mere dress, I *respect* the man in a smock frock more than I do the man in broad-cloth, or in silk. But, it does not follow, that I am to foster the *errors* of the former any more than those of the latter. Nay, to endeavour to correct those errors is the natural effect of the friendship I feel for him; and I must not be deterred from the discharge of my duty by an apprehension that he may take offence at that for which he ought to be thankful. No man likes to be shown that he is in the wrong; and he likes still less to see it made appear, that his opponent is in the right. This is a weakness, to which we are all liable; it is of universal prevalence, and, of course, you are

not exempt from it. I am aware, therefore, that I am about to perform a very ungracious task; but, that is not to keep me silent, when I see in circulation, errors the most mischievous in their tendency.

You have *turned out* for a rise of wages. You have, in my opinion, not only a right to do this, but, also to adopt any means, that are not contrary to the laws, to obtain a greater portion of money in exchange for your labour. But, when the grounds of your complaints are stated; when the causes of your distress are set forth; and, when these appear to be fallacious, friendship towards you, to say nothing of justice towards your masters, requires that the fallacy be shown to you.

Your situation is described as being most deplorable. These are the words of HUMANUS. "During the whole of the winter, and a much longer period than the winter, the workmen have been confined to their frames for fifteen or sixteen hours a day, with no other objects before their eyes than famishing, half-naked wives and children, and with no other sounds than those of lamentation and woe; children de-

“ manding food, and wives en-  
 “ deavouring to appease their  
 “ children,—not by bread, but  
 “ by promises of bread. Vain  
 “ expectation ! the evening  
 “ comes,—a cheerless evening to  
 “ them. Their neighbours have  
 “ been long in bed, enjoying  
 “ sweet repose : at eleven o’clock,  
 “ the poor stocking-maker quits  
 “ the frame, to which he had  
 “ been rivetted, often from four  
 “ or five in the morning,—eats  
 “ his solitary potatoe, if he has  
 “ one,—silently wipes away the  
 “ tears from the cheeks of his  
 “ partner in affliction, or mingles  
 “ his own with hers,—darts an  
 “ agonizing glance on the child-  
 “ ren sent supperless to bed, and  
 “ then creeps in amongst them,  
 “ hoping to find a short relief in  
 “ sleep from heart-rending dis-  
 “ tress, in the midst of these vic-  
 “ tims of sorrow, far dearer to  
 “ him than his own life. The  
 “ end of the week comes, and,  
 “ after rising early, and late  
 “ taking rest, he finds he has  
 “ only *five or six* shillings where-  
 “ with to provide food and rai-  
 “ ment and rent for seven days.”

This is what logicians call *prov-  
 ing too much* ; for, if this were  
 really true, you must all have  
 been *dead* long ago. People get  
 nothing by over-charged state-

ments ; for, they throw suspicion  
 on all that they say. However,  
 there is no doubt, that your suf-  
 ferings, even from sheer hunger,  
 are, and have been, very great ;  
 much greater than human beings  
 ought to endure, and, when en-  
 dured by sober and industrious  
 people, they reflect disgrace *some-  
 where* ; somebody must be to  
 blame ; there must be some *cause* ;  
 and our duty is to ascertain that  
 cause if we possibly can.

Therefore, when I had read  
 the above description of your  
 sufferings, I looked for the *cause*,  
 and I found it stated by your  
 pretended Advocate. But, alas !  
 what a cause ; or, rather, to what  
*root* was the cause traced ! A  
*deficiency of wages* is, no doubt,  
 the *immediate* cause ; but, how  
 has your pretended friend suc-  
 ceeded in showing the *cause of  
 that insufficiency* ! The want of  
 food causes starvation ; but, there  
 must be a cause of that want of  
 food ; and, if that cause be not  
 well known, it ought to be sought  
 for, and, if possible, discovered.

The cause, which is stated by  
 your pretended friend, is wholly  
 inadequate to the producing of  
 the alleged effect. His statement  
 is this : That you would be con-  
 tent with a price for your labour,  
 called the *statement price* ; that

your masters *can afford to give this price*; and that *they do not give it*.

The first and last of these propositions I take for granted; but, not thus the second; which I cannot believe in conjunction with the other two, and with the fact of the turn-out. Such a proposition would, to render it even plausible, require *proof* as clear as day-light; and, in support of this proposition I find no proof at all: not one single particle; and, indeed, nothing in the shape of proof. That masters should suffer their business to be at a stand; that they should suffer their stock to lie dead; that they should forego profits that they might make; and, that they should do this *voluntarily*, of their *own choice*, and that, too, with the circumstance of exposing themselves to the *just* hatred of their men; that this should take place is contrary to reason, and even in defiance of nature. Yet this must be, if the second proposition of HUMANUS be true. I am giving the masters no credit for *humanity*. They may, for ought I know, be equal in want of feeling to any of those *Cotton Lords*, to restrain whose obduracy towards poor children Acts of Parliament have been passed; but,

I may safely give them full credit for a regard to *self-interest*; and that is quite sufficient to make it *impossible*, that they should suffer your looms to stand still, if they could *gain* by the putting of them in motion.

However, let us hear what your pretended advocate says in support of his proposition. Let us hear his proofs of a thing which is against reason and nature. He says, that the Hosiers in *most extensive business*, aver that they *can afford* the statement prices. We might treat this as nothing; we might, indeed, call it a falsehood; because it is against reason, and because the *averment is not produced and attested*. We have the bare word of an anonymous writer for it: that is all; and that is nothing.

But, if the price *can be afforded*, why do not these Hosiers in *most extensive business* give it? If they *aver*, that they can afford it, why do they not *give it*? Mind, it is the Hosiers in *most extensive business* that aver this; and yet, they do not give the price! And they are *praised*, too, by this Advocate of your cause! If the Hosiers in *most extensive business* make the averment, why, again I ask, do they not give the *price*?

What is the answer to this



question? What is the solution of this enigma? Why, here we have it:—

“ The well-known fact is, that  
 “ there are persons in the trade,  
 “ calling themselves hosiers, who  
 “ have *no capital*, and therefore  
 “ resort to the *most unwarrant-*  
 “ *able means of making profit*,—  
 “ and who, to accomplish this ob-  
 “ ject, must be guilty of running  
 “ down the *established and re-*  
 “ *spectable manufacturer*, and  
 “ thus sinking the general inte-  
 “ rests of the trade, to make their  
 “ *particular speculations answer*.  
 “ By this ruinous innovation,  
 “ others of the hosiers are obliged,  
 “ in their own defence, to get  
 “ their goods manufactured at an  
 “ inferior price, in order to keep  
 “ the market.”

And, the devil they are! Poor, unfortunate “ established and re-  
 “ *spectable hosiers!*” Poor, un-  
 “ fortunate *men of capital!* To be  
 over-ruled thus by persons “ *cal-*  
 “ *ling themselves hosiers*, who  
 “ have *no capital!*” Poor, wretched rich men, to be *obliged*  
 to starve their work-people; and that, too, by rampscallians who only *call themselves* hosiers, and who have no capital! The state of these “ established and re-  
 “ *spectable hosiers*” is truly pitiable. Some effort ought to be

made to rescue *them* from this state of coercion, at any rate!

To see kind and tender souls thus spell-bound is lamentable. I could almost turn knight-errant myself, and sally out to the North for the deliverance of these kind-hearted and enchanted “ established” men of capital.

Now, was there ever any thing so incredible as this ventured upon paper before? Did any man ever venture his name at the foot of such an assertion? HUMANUS did not dare put his name to this, at once malignant and silly falsehood. We have often heard of the small tradesman and farmer being under the command of the rich; but, did any one ever before hear of the rich being under the command of the poor? Money, in trade especially, is *power*; but, here are men with no money *obliging* the rich to be hard-hearted, and (which might be rather more difficult) obliging them to forego the getting of profits!

In another part of HUMANUS’s pamphlet, these small hosiers are called by the nick-name of *Bag Hosiers*, a name arising, probably, from their carrying their goods to market in a bag on their backs, and given them, doubtless, by the great Hosiers, who wished to keep

down the growth of rivals in trade. The passage is curious; and I will insert it, because it opens to us a good deal of the designs of your deluders:—

“It cannot be too frequently insisted upon as a maxim in the trade, that low prices to the workmen, will, if persisted in, ruin it, both as to respectability and profit; and, that sufficient prices alone can *cut off from the respectable body of Hosiers that reptile race, denominated Bag Hosiers, who have wriggled themselves into the business, and who, with a mixture of cruelty and rapacity, at once snatch the bread from the mouth of the workman, and the fair profits from the hands of the regular and honourable manufacturer.*”

We had before to express our astonishment at the cruelty of these Bag Hosiers in *obliging* the men of capital to be hard hearted to their workmen; but, what are we to think of their ferocity in *snatching the fair profits from the hands of the regular and honourable manufacturer!* Why, they are imps of the Devil to be sure! It is said, that *three hornets will kill a horse*: but, then, hornets have wings and stings, which the poor horse has

not; whereas the Bag-Hosiers have no natural advantages, and have every other possible disadvantage in a contest with the established and rich Hosiers. That they, therefore, should be able to *snatch* any profits from them is altogether incredible. It is a monster even in supposition: and, what is it, then, when gravely stated as a fact?

But there is something more in this account of the Bag-Hosiers, and something too, which, I hope, you have not perceived; for, if I could believe that you have perceived it, and that you approve of this passage of the pamphlet, you would no longer be objects of compassion with me, but objects of my most hearty contempt.

Pray, what is meant by men *wriggling themselves into business?* Do not all *young beginners*; all those, who, from being journeymen, become masters; all those, who, from being labourers, become farmers; all those, who, from being clerks, become merchants: do not all these *wriggle* themselves on, pray? And, can there be any thing more desirable than this in a community? What is *wriggling*, in an affair like this? Why, *getting on by degrees*. Rising by slow

degrees, by trying every opening, by keeping the ground, inch by inch, when gained, by steady and tenacious industry and care. This is "*wriggling into business.*" And, did not I *wriggle* myself from a private soldier to a serjeant major, and, if I had remained, with all my military notions, should I not have wriggled myself up to a general, in spite of all the birth and rank in the kingdom? Many persons censure the Lord High Chancellor for many of his acts, and, perhaps, they censure him justly in all cases; but, it never yet came into the head of any one to revile him on account of his being the son of a coal-merchant.

Yours (if you adopt the language of your Advocate) is a pretty set of principles indeed! You are for an *aristocracy* in trade; you are for *Lords of the Loom*; you are for shutting out your own brother workmen, your own kindred and children; and, as for yourselves, you, if you adopt these sentiments, are guilty of an abandonment of the *chance* of advancement in life. You are for cutting off the chain of connection between the rich and the poor. You are for demolishing all small tradesmen. You are for reducing the community to two classes: *Masters and Slaves.*

However, let me hope, that these are not *your* sentiments. Let me hope, that you are not so lost to all sense of just pride, to all feelings of independence, as to be willing to see your children deprived of all hope of *wriggling* upwards, merely for the sake of flattering the present Lords of the Loom, and coaxing them into an augmentation of your wages. Let me hope that this is not the case; and, in that hope, let me proceed in my endeavours to show you the absurdity of ascribing your low wages to the influence of the Bag-Hosiers.

According to the showing of your pretended advocate, the *great Hosiers* are all for the *high prices*. Now, is it not impossible, that this can be true? If they were to give the high prices, would the *small Hosiers* get any body to work for them? Must not these latter, therefore be ruined? It is not true, then, that those whom he calls "established" and respectable Hosiers, "are willing to give the high prices. It is not true, and it cannot be true, that even a *considerable part* of them are; because, if they were, they would give them, and let the rest remain with looms unemployed.

And, what, after all, is the

true cause of this *reduction in your wages*? Why, a reduction in the quantity of money, which the public, that is to say, the *stocking-wearers*, have to expend in stockings. They want as *many stockings*, and as *good stockings* as ever; but, if they have them *at all*, they must have them for *less money*; and, as things are now going, for less and less money every year, in spite of ail that HUMANUS can say, in spite of all that the “established” men can aver, and in spite of all that can be done in order to run down the *Bag-Hosiers*.

Why, have you been living in England without knowing, that *Peel's Bill* has worked wonders? Without knowing, that it has brought down wheat from 15s. to 6s. 6d. a bushel? Now, the farmers and their people wear stockings; and, can a farmer give 15s. *now* for stockings as easily as he could when wheat was fifteen shillings a bushel? There is less money, less nominal amount of money, and, of course, the price of stockings must be less, and, a necessary consequence of that is, that the wages for making them must be less.

HUMANUS (who ought to have called himself *fool* or *hypocrite*) tells you, that the demand for

stockings has *not fallen off*. “The “Hosiers,” says he, “who entered into an agreement, in “Leicestershire, to pay the high “prices, found no difficulty in “disposing of their goods, notwithstanding the increased price “they had paid for the manufacturing of them,—how should “they? The difference of price “to the public is a trifle; and “the public never complained, “nor could complain of a burden which they did not feel. “The public even reaped advantage from the increased price; “for the Framework-knitters and “their families constitute the “most numerous class of consumers in the country, and the “quantity of their consumption “must be proportioned to the “extent of their earnings. The “circulation of money depends “as much on the wages of labour, as on the profits of stock; and if thirty thousand “persons rise from abject poverty to a capacity of commanding a larger share of the “necessaries, and many of the “comforts of life, the money “which procures them will flow “into every channel, so as to “benefit alike the tradesman, “the agriculturist, and the landed proprietor.”



This is a pretty dish of nonsense from beginning to end. Immediately afterwards he says, that the Leicestershire Hosiers *evaded* the agreement, by *getting their work done at low prices in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire!* "This," says he, "shows the *"necessity of union."* No: it shows the inutility of all such agreements; it shows that they cannot be made binding on the parties; it shows that labour must be left to the demand for it; and it shows the folly of your pretended Advocate.

"The difference to the *public*," says he, "was a *trifle*." He seems to suppose that *the public* live upon nothing but stockings. The difference was a *trifle*; aye, but this difference was only upon *one article* of the many articles that the public want. A great many trifles amount to a great deal; and they *must* be attended to, because the want of the means of purchase *compels* this attention. "*The public*," says he, "*never complained*." Complained! Who was the public *to complain to*? What organ is there, through which *the public* is to *complain* about the price of stockings? What insufferable nonsense is this! Do the public ever complain in such a case?

People that want stockings go without new ones, if they have not money to buy them. They have *so much* which they could lay out in stockings; but, that not being enough, they must have their old ones mended. They buy cheap ones instead of dear ones. This is the way the thing works. It works in silence, and the nation do not send delegates down into the stocking counties to *complain* of the price of stockings. And, as to the high price of stockings being no *burden* on the public, why, was it not? Because people were not *compelled* to purchase; they avoided the burden by not purchasing at so high a price; and, the consequence was, the price *came down* to a level with people's powers of purchase.

Absurd as all this is, what follows is still more absurd. It goes upon the supposition, that all the stockings are consumed out of the three counties, and that all the benefits of the high wages are to be felt by those counties only; and, that, therefore, *the public*, (that is the three counties) were benefited by the high wages. But, what a foolish view of the matter is this! Just as if the whole nation were to pay a high price for stockings purely

to benefit those counties. Oh, no! The *market* is much too true a regulator to suffer such partiality as this. The whole nation has so much, and no more, to expend in stockings, and it can expend to that extent and no farther.

Viewing the thing in this its true light, what is the nation, and particularly the "*landed proprietor*" to gain by an additional sum being given to you in wages? I wish you *had* an additional sum. It is horrid to think of so many human beings living half-starved. But, what is he to gain by a million of money being paid to stocking-weavers in wages, *more* than is now paid to them? Is there not a million *less* to be laid out by somebody else? If the labourer pay a crown a year *more* for his stockings, has he not a crown *less* to lay out in bread and beer? If, indeed, the additional million, expended by you, were to be expended by you, or flung into the sea; or, if the additional million were to drop down into your hands from the clouds; in either of those cases, there might be some sense in HUMANUS's argument: as the thing is, all he says is nonsense.

The cause, the *real cause* of your distress, is the same as that of the distress of other people:

the *taxes*, which take from those who labour, and give to those who do not labour. Every man bears a share of this burden in proportion to his consumption compared with his income; and, as the working man consumes *all* his income, and in necessities of life too, he is oppressed more than any other class by the operation of taxes. This is the real cause of your sufferings. There is no doubt that your masters might pay you higher wages, nevertheless; but, as they *must* be losing while they did this, they could do it only for a short time. Each man might do it, 'till he was ruined; but, at last, and that last would soon come, your sufferings must return; and remain they must, *until the taxes be diminished*.

But, this state of things cannot have come upon you unawares; for, though those men of your choice, the *Members for Leicester and Nottingham*, did not forewarn you, I did. If you did not read that which I wrote in Long-Island, the fault was *yours*, and not mine. Before the passing of *Peel's Bill*, and long before, I clearly stated what would be the effect of any *such measure*; as soon as the Bill was passed, I pointed out all the consequences

of it ; and now you are beginning (for it is only *beginning*) to taste of those consequences. If you did not read, it was your own fault ; if you did, you ought not to be surprised at what has happened. You now hear of speeches and resolutions about the repeal of this Bill ; but these come too late ; the parliament now knows not what to do. It reels and staggers backward and forward, and knows not what is to become of us, or of it. What will happen, in the end, no man can say ; but, we know that nothing can happen to make our lot *worse* than it is. It is at its wit's end. The war, the war that I, long ago, predicted, between the land and the funds, is brewing. Our only hope is in the effect of this war ; and, let HUMANUS, and other fools and impostors, say what they will about *funds* and *combinations* and *subscriptions*, a removal of the *cause* of all our sufferings, by a *Reform of the Parliament*, is the *only remedy*.

Let us now take a look at the *remedy* that has been pointed out to you. It is this :—to remain in the *turn-out*, until the masters will enter into an agreement to pay you the wages demanded. Of your *support in the meanwhile* I will speak bye-and-bye ; but,

suppose an agreement made. Who is, without a positive law, to enforce its observance ? Suppose wheat fall to *four shillings* a bushel, and your delicious hog-food, potatoes, to *sixpence* a bushel. Will the masters be able to pay you the *statement price* then ? Will the farmer have as much money to lay out in stockings as he had when wheat was 15s. a bushel, or, as he has now, when it is 6s. ? And if he have *less* money to lay out, can he lay out *as much* ? Of course he cannot, and, one of two things must happen : he must have his stockings *cheaper*, or go *without stockings*, which, you will please to observe, are not absolutely necessary to man's existence ; for, there are many people in the world who do not wear stockings, and yet who have plenty to eat and to drink. I have seen very pretty women in my life-time, and gaily dressed too, in other respects, and with silk shoes upon their feet, but without stockings. About ten years of my life I have dispensed with stockings, winter as well as summer. So that, stockings are amongst the last of those things which are *indispensable*. Do you imagine, then, that, if the farmer sell his wheat for four shillings a bushel, he will expend

on stockings as much money as he does now? You cannot imagine this; and, therefore, any *agreement* that your masters may make with you must depend, for its continuance in force, on circumstances with regard to which neither they nor you can have any controul.

But, suppose, on the contrary, wheat to rise again to 15s. a bushel! Would *you*, in that case, stand to your agreement? No: for if you did, you must actually starve at once. And, mind, this *may* happen. I do not *think* it will, and I *hope* it will not. But, who can form an opinion of what is to happen; who can have a foundation for hope; when the thing depends upon what may, or may not, be done by the Honourable Honourable, thrice Honourable House! Knowing that that House has the absolute power of raising and of lowering prices, no man can possibly foresee what prices may be even at the distance of six weeks. According to present appearances the prices will continue to come down. The Ministers say (and I do hope they will stand to their word) that they are "firmly resolved" to carry *Peel's Bill* into execution. They will not do that; but, they may go on ano-

ther year with the attempt; and, if they do, wheat will be four shillings a bushel, and *stockings will be at about half their present price.*

Now, is it possible for your masters to pay you even what they now pay, if the wheat come down to four shillings and the stockings to half their price? What, then, in such a state of things, is the use of *agreements*? What securities can they give; and what foundation of hope have you in them?

Yet, in order to *force* the masters to come to such an agreement, an appeal is made to the *Nobility* and *Gentlemen* to come forward to support the turn-out *fund*; and this fund is to support you while out of work. Whether the Nobility and Gentlemen will do this I know not; but, this I know, that I wish they may; for it is much pleasanter for you, and more for your health to have a month or two of roaming about than to be nailed down to your looms. I wish they may yield, in this way, what cannot be got from them in any other way. I wish they may give out of spite that which they do not give from any other motive. However, this resource will soon fail you; and, before it be long, the "agriculturists" as you call them,



will show you their *sabres*, I am afraid! It is quite useless for you to declare, that you harbour "*no political discontent*;" they will not believe you; and, you will see, that, at last, you will be called *rioters*, if not *rebels*, in spite of all your quiescent declarations. The Magistrates of Nottingham have already *warned* you of the tenor of the *Six-Acts*, which forbid men to meet to *discuss matters of trade*; and, it will not be long before the brave Gomanry Cavalry will make their appearance. Do not, therefore, indulge the nation, that the Nobility and Gentlemen will support you for any length of time; and, I beseech you to think of other means of support.

But, are you to have *no redress*, then? Are you to *starve* in short? No: no man, woman, or child is to starve. The *law* says this. And, rely upon the law. A weaver works constantly; he is sober; he wastes nothing; he earns all he *can*; his master can or will give him no more; and with what he gets he is starving with his family. Now, what says the *law*? Why, that he shall be *relieved*; that he shall be *assisted*: that he shall share out of the *common stock*; out of what was originally *one man's as much*

*as another's*; out of that which *God gave to us all*; out of the LAND. This is what the *law* says, though *Parson Malthus* and his follower *Parson Copplestone* (I have just found this man!) wish the law to be altered. Every human being, in every country, has, if he duly perform his duties in society, a *right* to support from *the land*, in case of need; in case such support be necessary to his existence without pain from hunger. The law of *nature* says this. This is a command of God; and this command has been recognized by the laws of England. When the lands became private property, they carried this charge along with them. The lands *belong* to the owners; but, they are charged with *tithes* and with the *share of the poor*. What a furious out-cry the Parsons would make, if their tithes were withheld! *They* tell us, that *their right* is as good as that of the Landlord; and so it is. But, is it any *better* than the *right* of the poor? It is not so good: it is not so ancient; it has no foundation in *nature*: and, if they go back and lay the foundation of their right in the laws of Moses, they will find the *rights of the poor* still more clearly founded in those laws. Moses and Christ

both establish the rights of the poor, but Christ enjoins nothing about *tithes*.

To the *land*, therefore, are you to look, when wages are insufficient; that is to say, to the *law* for your relief; to the law made to prevent the poor from starving; to the *parish rates*, which is the *share*, which the law has provided for the poor; which rates were intended to supply the place of that *taking in kind*, which existed before those rates were imposed; for, before that time, the *tithes* were, as far as they were wanted for that purpose, to go to the support of the poor. The rates are no hardship to the Landlord or Tenant, any more than tithes are a hardship. The *tithes* are not the property of Landlord or Tenant; nor are the rates; they belong to the poor.

Here, then, is your *remedy*; here is your only *real remedy*; your *lawful remedy* for incessant hunger under incessant toil. No wonder that there should be *parishes* to prompt you to continue the *turn-out* for wages. Those who pay the rates, and who thus stimulate you, wish to *keep you off the rates*. They wish to make your masters pay you in a way that will *keep you from the parish*. They must

know, that your masters will be *losing* by this; but, for that they care not, if they can but shift the burden from their own shoulders. It is said, that, in some parishes, the Overseers have given part of the rates in the way of subscription to the *turn-out fund*! If this be true, what a monstrous thing is here! This is not *charity*, but *malignity*: it is "benevolence" proceeding from the basest of *selfishness*. It is wholly *unlawful*; no man is compelled to pay rates applied to such a purpose; and, such overseers may be, and ought to be, severely punished. It is very laudable in you to wish to *keep from the parish*; but in this case you do not so keep. You are here receiving parish relief as a *favour*; as *an alms*; when you might receive it as a *right*.

The conduct of such OVERSEERS is, however, *foolish* as well as unlawful and unjust. They make their parishes combine for the purpose of compelling your masters to give you, to their own *loss*, that which you ought to have out of the rates. But, *can* this succeed? No: for, if the masters, who may, perhaps, be as rich as the Cotton Lords, were actually to yield, they must very soon be totally ruined. They

must soon become "Bag-Ho-siers," and sooner after that *Beggars*, or, at least, *Paupers*; and, then, the Parishes must support you. But, the Lords of the Loom are not such fools as to remain in that state, 'till they be ruined. If it were possible for you to be kept out of work for any length of time; for a year, for instance; the chances are, that Lords of the Loom would quit their concern, and become *gentlemen*. They might come up to London, have their box within the bills of mortality, or go to France, or while away their time in some other place. They would, probably, for the greater part, become stock-holders; and then they would have a fair chance of vengeance on the "Lords of the Soil."

However, this is what will not happen. Some will thus retire; others will remain; stockings will continue to be worn, and, of course, continue to be made; and you will receive, in the shape of wages, as much as your masters can pay you, leaving a sufficient profit to themselves; and you will, in that shape, receive *no more*, do what you will, or let Noblemen, Gentlemen, and Overseers do what they will for you. If the masters can get a profit by

their trade, they will carry it on: if they cannot, they will leave the trade: they will never remain to reduce themselves to beggary, for the purpose of *easing the rates*; that is to say, they will never remain to give up their fortunes for the supposed benefit of the Landlords and Land-occupiers, who have been so long profiting from the labour and care of almost all the rest of the community.

But, now, what is the cause, the primary cause, of all this turmoil; of all this unnatural strife between *masters and men*? For, I like these words a great deal better than the newfangled jargon of "*Employer and Operative*." When *master and man* were the terms, every one was in his place; and all were *free*. Now, in fact, it is an affair of *masters and slaves*, and the word, *master*, seems to be avoided only for the purpose of covering our shame. What, I say, is the *primary cause* of all this unnatural strife? To see bands of stocking-makers prowling about from town to town, dragging waggon loads of coals, as is, at this moment the case; to see bands of their *wives and daughters*, which is also actually the case, dragging waggons loaded with coals or chalk or stone, from town to town. To

see these things ; to see you, the ingenious and industrious people of England, prowling about in begging bands, with inscriptions and devices to call forth charity. To see fathers of families, engaged in this manner, *run over and wounded, or killed*, by the very waggon, which they themselves are dragging, as was the case only last week. To behold these things, and to suppose that the *cause* is to be removed by a turn-out of workmen for an addition of wages, is to evince a symptom of stark madness.

We must look for this cause elsewhere than in the *avarice* of your masters. There must be something at work far more powerful than that. During the war your wages were high. During the war they would have been low ; but the Landlords and Borough Lords, who are all one body, borrowed money and created first what they borrowed. This *relieved them* ; for the war was carried on, and the country filled with money, without their contributing, in fact, any thing. In the first Register that I published after my last return to England, I explained to Lord Liverpool the way in which a *false money works*. Mr. PAINE had, before, and long before, said, that Paper-money,

that is to say, *false money*, was *strength at the beginning* and *weakness at the end*. I showed *how it worked* to produce the *strength*, and how it *worked* to produce the *weakness*. I supposed this case : here is a village of a thousand inhabitants, and one gentleman. While the gentleman confines his expenditure to his real solid income, the village remains in the state, in which it has been for ages. But, let him get a parcel of bank-notes, no matter how, and expend them in the village, up rises new houses, and all is suddenly in what is called a flourishing state. This keeps on for some years ; and we admire this *flourishing* affair. But, all at once, the supply of bank notes ceases ; and all crumbles into decay. Some of the village are in debt to others, and the debtors become paupers, while the Gentleman himself loses his estate. Indeed he has no longer any *right* to it. He has borrowed the bank-notes ; and though they were intrinsically worth nothing, they obtained him labour and the fruit of labour, on which having expended the amount of his estate, the estate is no longer his. Another comes and possesses the estate ; but this other cannot borrow as the gentleman d'd. *He*



lives upon the real income, and the village, blown up by an unnatural prosperity, gradually sinks back into its former state.

This has been the case with *this nation*, which is now coming back to its former state. BARING has, very recently, made use of this very illustration in the House of Commons, for which, in any fair and honest court of criticism, he would be condemned to wear the dunce's cap. I must get some poet to write me a *Political Dunciad*, and put me all these plagiarists on a string. Spit them as we do small-birds, so that they may be twirled round, and decently roasted.

But, to return, *the nation* is now tasting the consequences of a false-money. All classes, except the tax-eaters, suffer, and except the *labourers in husbandry*, and in *things closely connected with husbandry*, who do not suffer so much as they did, because they are so very *near to the food*; because it *necessarily passes through their hands*; and because low-price necessarily throws so much in their way, a matter fully explained in my Letters to GAFFER GOOCH. With these exceptions, the whole nation suffers, just as the village, above supposed, would suffer. It was

not *money* that the gentleman borrowed. It was a *false thing*. It was a shuffling of paper about. But it answered his purpose. The vagabonds, who made it for him, were possessed of no property. It was the representative of *nothing valuable*. But, it served his turn for the time. Those vagabonds, in the end, however, get his estate; and, the village, the "*flourishing*" village is going to decay.

The state of this gentleman will finally be that of all the Landlords in England, unless they cancel the bonds, unless they refuse to pay the debts contracted, unless they refuse to surrender their estates. The *weakest* will go to the wall *first*; but, the turn of *all* will come. To be sure, it is melancholy to think of the exit of the ancient "Lords of the Soil;" of such men as Traffard of Traffard, Hulton of Hulton, De Burgh of De Burgh, De Dunsterville of de Basset, and the like, all as old as "the Conquest," and some as old as Cain, or any of the people of the Land of Nod. But, when one reflects on the sufferings of the Reformers who have been, and who are, in dungeons, one feels, if not absolute consolation, something else nearly as gratify-

ing, and as satisfactory to the human heart.

The fact is, that the Landlords have, for many years, been borrowing in order to keep for their own spending the incomes of their estates; and, BARING boldly told them the other night, that they *now wanted to cheat their creditors!* Oh! fie! call the great "Lords of the Soil" *cheats!* Fie Mr. BARING! But, robbery is as bad as cheating, and let me beg of you not to rob me any more. I like you very much. You are a bold, stirring, working blade; and you bolt out a great deal of my good stuff; but, as you are so anxious to prevent the Fund-holders from being robbed, pray have a little mercy upon *me*. Pay your debts to me you cannot; for you have nothing, in my way, of *your own*; but, you may *acknowledge them* at any rate. You are worse, in this respect, than the Landlords, for they do *acknowledge* their debts; they do say, that they *borrowed* the thing, though they do not seem to be disposed to pay. Make them pay by all means; and all I ask of you is to acknowledge that you have *borrowed* of me. Take a Register and read it to your audience, with all my heart; but do not

mush and mash it about, and call it your own. Do not take my good, clean, solid joints, just done and full of gravy, and send them forth hashed up amongst your Dutch sour-cROUT. Serve them up neat, as they come from the shop, or let them alone.

Excuse me, my good friends, for this digression. When we find our property in other hands, we are very apt to stop to take it. The Landlords have, for years, been *borrowing*, and scattering a thing over the country which they called *money*. It was, as in the case of the village above supposed, *not money*, nor the representative of any thing of *real value*. It was, as Mr. PAINE so emphatically and truly observed, not who should *lend money*, but who should *write his name*. Beggars have become richer than Lords, and have, too, partly got their estates, parks and mansions already; and they will have the rest. *Jew Orange Boys* are now become great landed proprietors. But, the stuff, no matter what it was, answered, for the time, *the purpose of money*. It puffed all up into prosperity, and war, always, before, the cause of poverty, was now thought to *create riches*. Peace, as *I always said it would*, put an end to the flowry

dream. Oh! but, the *check* was owing merely to "*a sudden transition from war to peace.*"—"The sun" (not the *scene*, as erroneously printed in the last Register) "of British prosperity was hidden for a moment, only to re-appear in greater splendour than ever." These were the words of the two "greatest statesmen in the world," CASTLE-REAGH and CANNING. I saw what was at work: I told the Landlords in 1814, 1815 and 1816, when they were bawling for Corn-Bills, to "*look at the Old Lady in Threadneedle-Street,*" and they would find, that no Corn-Bills would counteract her tricks. She was just then beginning that series of measures, which Providence had provided for their just punishment; for, if we look through the world, we shall find, that it is, nine times out of ten, the sinner that is employed as the instrument in punishing the sinner.

The village gentleman ceased to have bank-notes to expend, and the village fell into decay; a stagnation took place first; afterwards a gradual reverting to its former state; and, at last, after much ruin and great suffering amongst individuals, the village had a *new gentleman*, and that

was all the change that forty years had made. Now, all these consequences will take place as to *this nation*, let what will be done to prevent it, except the last, the mere transfer of the estate; and that can be prevented only by a *successful war* of the Landlords against the Fund-lords.—Repealing of PEEL'S BILL; pushing the Paper out again; adopting "the Ricardo Plan;" these, or any one of these, might, and would, arrest the progress of the thing a little; but, at last, all these consequences *must* come, except the last; except the mere *transfer of the land*; and that must come, too, unless a sponge, or something very much like a sponge, be applied to the *Debt*.

These, my friends, are the *real causes* of the low-price of your wages. The taxes are so great, that they leave not bread sufficient for you, unless a part of your meal come out of the master's property already realized. The weight of the taxes fall on all, and leave their pressure on all except those who *eat taxes*; that is to say, whose incomes come out of taxes. Lord Sidmouth's salary, for instance, will buy twice as much wheat as it bought some years ago. His expenditure is, of course, larger; his servants

live better; he, therefore, draws twice as much as he did from the *productive classes*. It is the same with all placemen, pensioners, sinecure people, judges, police-people, soldiers, sailors, and fund-lords. Must not this be felt? Must not those, who do not eat taxes, *feel this*? And, while this great and furious and desolating cause is at work, does it become *you* to be made to believe, that your sufferings are *wholly disconnected with politics*; and, that your masters, who suffer, and must suffer, along with other taxpayers, refuse to give you wages that they *can afford to give*, though it is manifestly their *pressing interest* to act in a contrary way? I know nothing of those masters; I never knew one of them in my life; I shall never know one of them; if they were all to be knocked in the head to-morrow, though I should be ashamed of my country on that account, I should not lose a farthing by their destruction. They may, too, for aught I know, be, all of them, as haughty, as insolent, as unfeeling, as the Cotton Lords; they may all be bitter persecutors of Reformers; they may be as much enemies of me as the men who sent a man to jail, at Bolton, in Lancashire, and kept him in jail *ten weeks*, for having gone round that town with a bill to tell the people, that "their country-man, William Cobbett, had arrived at Liverpool in good health;" they may, for any thing that I know, be all this; but, at the same time, you ought not to entertain *false notions* as to the real cause of your sufferings; you ought, like men of

sense, to look aloft for the real cause, and not go grubbing about after it in the *dispositions* and *tempers* of traders, who always do, because they always *must*, consult, and strictly follow, their own interests; and, above all things, it becomes not *you* to surrender your understandings, and become the sport of selfish wretches, who, to keep you from making your just demand upon the *rates*, offer you a paltry bibe out of these rates, under the guise of *humanity* and *charity*; and also the sport of other selfish wretches, who, while they wallow in luxury coming from taxes raised partly on you, would direct your anger towards your masters and turn it aside from what they call "*political causes*."

Unless I am wrong in all that I have said here, your sufferings are to be ascribed *solely to political causes*; and, let the canters say what they will, it is your business to inquire into those causes. I see that *collections* have been made for you at *Methodist Chapels*. Very well. I have no objection to this. If by the *turn-out* you can *better your lot*, I am glad of it, whether your masters suffer or not; because the good of many is to be preferred to the good of a few. Therefore, whether the thing be *wise* or not, the motive of the *collections* at *Chapels* is, doubtless, good; because the congregations cannot, as in the case of *parishes*, profit from what you may be able to obtain from your masters. But, as I see "*Reverend Gentlemen*" engaged in this work of collecting, may I hope, that they are not amongst those, who *ea-communi-*



cate their people for being Reformers? May I hope, that they have been as ready to *visit the imprisoned*, and to *collect for them*? Or, am I, taking your pretended Advocate, HUMANUS, for one of those *Reverend Persons*, to believe, that they, like him, deprecate your thinking about *politics*; exhort you to be contented with the "*wholesome principles of good government*" now in force, and caution you against "*Artful and designing men*, who are actively engaged in taking advantage of your distress to sow, in your minds discontent as to those principles?" If I am to consider them in this light, I pronounce them to be artful and designing and selfish impostors; or else, the most ignorant of all mankind.

• What! you are in misery, steeped to the very lips, and these men *forbid you to inquire into the cause*? You see the whole nation (with the aforementioned exceptions) in deep suffering. You see the Parliament plied *minutely* with cries of distress, from all quarters and corners of the kingdom. You are in distress too; and, these foolish or insincere men tell you that you are not to ask a word about the great and *general cause*; while they endeavour to misguide your judgment, and to fix your resentment where it is not, because it *cannot*, be due!

The causes have been truly stated to you by me; and, does it not become you to inquire how the effects can be *mitigated*; how the pressure may be made *less heavy* to you; how the suffering may be rendered *less severe*? If

it do not become you to make inquiries upon this subject; if you be to remain mute here; if you be to *feel* and not ascertain the cause; if this be forbidden to you, of what use is your *reason*? Are you to go on suffering, until, in the language of your pretended Advocate, "there is no thing left but what *a righteous God*, who beholds with equal eye the rich and the poor, may see fit, in his Providence, to provide for his creatures in such an extremity." Was there ever such cant, such stupid cant as this, addressed before to rational beings? If your dependence be on God (without any exertions of your own) why do you stir at all? If, in this way, you expect relief, why drag waggon about the country? Nay, how come you to want relief at all? How came Providence to suffer you to be poor and to go to bed hungry? Oh, no! It is not in this way that the God of all nature order things. He sees, indeed, with *equal eye* the rich and the poor; but he interferes not to *make them equal*. That is a plain case, or you would be as rich as your Masters. Your clothes may go to the pawnbroker's still, and you will become stark naked, I assure you, if you be deluded by cant like this. If you wait to be fed by the ravens, you will become skeletons to a certainty. Ravens do not bring dinners *now*, nor do asses speak to warn us of danger, though, really, one might almost expect as good advice from an ass as from this councillor of the Stocking-makers. Yes, God is *righteous*, my friends; much too

righteous to allot wisdom of action to those who turn their back upon reason and common sense ; much too righteous to allot relief to those, who, wanting bread, will not pursue the means which reason points out for getting it. Yes, yes ; God views rich and poor with an equal eye : that is to say, he gives *reason* and *bodily faculties* to both ; and it is for both to make use of these for the maintenance or the acquirement of their rights. God acts by " general, and not by partial laws." If we be low and degraded the *fault* is *our own*, or it is that of *somebody else* ; and, it is a miserable excuse for our negligence, or folly to pretend that the fault is God's, which, in fact, we do, if we affect to wait for him to deliver us, without any exertion of our own. It is this silly, and *really impious*, cant that has, more than almost any thing, tended to degrade the people of this country. The *system* has, amongst other things, thrown the people into the hands of designing knaves, who pick a living out of their miseries, by preaching, or prating, about the efficacy of inward light, and God knows what ; and who are the fast *friends of the system*, and the bitter enemies of every exertion to alter it. Was it ever yet known, that nations, or individuals, prospered without *using the means*, and the human meanstoo, of attaining prosperity ? And how, then, are you to expect your lot to be bettered, except by such means ? If these canting fellows can feed and clothe you by supernatural means, why do they not do it ? Not only do they not feed you ; not only does

God not send them the means of furnishing you with food and raiment ; but, he does not send them the means of thus furnishing themselves ; for, they fail not to apply to you for your weekly pennies ; and they help to produce that very poverty, from which they profess so anxious a desire to see you relieved.

Turn, then, I pray you, my countrymen, from these sons of cant ; these men who would deprive you of the use of *reason*, that best gift of God ; and would make submissive to *themselves* and *the system*, while they are endeavouring to inflame you against men, who do, because they *must*, though in fortune, while yours is in belly and back, *suffer as well as yourselves*. Turn from these really " *artful and designing* " men," and listen to truth and sober sense.

You see, then, that the suffering is general. You see that the cause is general. You see how it has been created. And you see, that there can be no relief, until the cause be effectually removed. When was it *before* known, that *peace*, especially after a long war, did not bring prosperity ? It is natural, that when a waste of public treasure ceases, when the duties attached to a state of war ceases, when the losses occasioned by war are put an end to ; it is natural that a people should be better off, should be easier and happier. Yet, the reverse of this, generally speaking, has been the case with us. The taxes, that enormous load upon those who labour, have been increased, instead of diminished. For, though taxes have been taken off, the real amount

of the remainder has been doubled by acts of the parliament, raising the value of the money. This is the cause of the *distress*. So large a portion is taken from those who labour to be given to those who do not labour, that the former have hardly enough to sustain life. Hence all the parish regulations for allowances proportioned to the number of children; hence all the schemes for confining the labourers to the quantity of food necessary to sustain existence and no more.

What! And will your canting advocate say, that you ought not to meddle with *politics*, then? And, will you shut your ears against sense and reason at his command, and for fear he should send you to the devil for entertaining "*political discontent*?" Politics means *public affairs*; and, if you have *no discontent on this score*, for God's sake hold your tongues, and go back to your miserable hovels and put yourselves to bed and pawn the rags that are now on your backs. If you cannot see, that all the tax-eaters have now full double what they had five years ago; if you cannot see, that their having double must cause you to have less; or if, seeing this, you be *quite content on the score* of public matters, you are even lower in the scale of the creation than your pretended advocate has represented you to be. If you cannot see, that what another takes from, and consumes, cannot be left to be consumed by yourselves, you really are too low in the creation to be treated as human beings.

Suppose that the placemen, pensioners, sinecure people, sol-

diers, sailors, tax-gatherers, and fund-lords were, when they receive their allowances, to send half of it back to be divided, in due proportions according to their payments of taxes, amongst those who have paid the taxes. Would you not feel the benefit of this? Must you not suffer, then, from the taking away the tax money? And, the real fact is, that the taxes have been doubled, and the tax-eaters do receive double of what they received five years ago. You cannot bear this. You must have assistance; you must have something to make up for this additional drain; and whence are you to have it, but from the *land*, that out of which all arises, that which is held by individuals upon the *condition*, that they provide for the indigent and helpless. You are to live: you are not to be starved: you have a *right* to food and raiment if helpless, or if, by due labour, you cannot obtain it. This is the condition upon which the land is held; and, if the Landlords, they who have, and who always must have, the powers of Government in their hands, wish that the demands of the poor should be *light*, it is for them to take care not to suffer the poor to be so burdened with taxes as to compel them, when able and willing to work, to come for relief. The taxes it is that makes the poverty and misery; and, if the Landlords impose those taxes, let their land answer for it.

This is the common-sense view of the matter; and this view will, I hope, have due impression upon you. The wish, which your advocate says you entertain, not to

be chargeable to the parish; that wish is, in itself, laudable, but, the *wisdom* of it must depend upon circumstances; and, even the justice of it is rather more than doubtful, when accompanied with a wish to abstain from parish relief at the *expense of individuals*, who are thus to bear the whole of the burden that ought to fall upon the nation in general. There is a decay in your trade; there is a falling off in your wages; misfortune has pressed heavily upon you. Well; you are part of us; you are part of the great family of the nation; and we must *all* come to your aid. And, how is this to be done? Why, by the *parish rates*, which, as true as the sun, will divide the burden amongst us. For, who, at last, pays the farmer's rates? Who, but the *consumers* of his crops? Those who go to shops pay the shop-keepers rates. And there the thing goes. The rate is collected *on the land*, because that is always *visible* and of ascertained value; but, in the end, the rates fall upon the whole community; every one paying in proportion to his consumption.

This, then, is the source to which you are to apply in case of need, and not to the purses of individuals. There are laws, and severe laws too, against *vagrancy* and *begging*, and the laws are *just*. But, upon what ground are they just? Why is it just to forbid the indigent and helpless to appeal publicly to the charity of those who are able to assist them? Because the *law* has made provision for all of us; because the land itself is charged with the duty of relieving them; because

vagrancy and begging are disgraceful, are degrading to the character of man; and because the English nation would not suffer this degradation in the persons of Englishmen. Justice, wisdom, humanity and high-spirit never united to devise any thing more honourable to man than these laws, which say, in substance, no unoffending person shall suffer want or degradation in this land.

But, the misery occasioned by taxation has, in a great measure, rendered the laws against vagrancy and begging nugatory. Those, whose duty it is to enforce these laws, are also those, in general, who have to pay the rates in the first instance; and, therefore, in order to ease themselves on this score, they permit vagrancy and begging all over the country; and you cannot now pass a day at a farm house without seeing it visited by strolling beggars. Thus does this taxing system regularly work to the ruin of the very character of the people. And, is a change to come without our meddling with *politics*? Are we to wait "till *a righteous God* may see fit" to relieve us, when we well know, that that God has given us reason for our guide and limbs for our help? What presumption to suppose, that we are to be rescued by a miracle from miseries, into which, as a nation, we have plunged ourselves! The man who can hold such opinions must be amongst the most silly, or most hypocritical, of his species.

The causes have been of our own creating; that is to say, of those who have passed the Acts



of parliament for the imposing of taxes and for changing, backward and forward, the value of money. By these Acts the nation has been first puffed up by a *fa se prosperity*, and has now been hurled down into an unnatural state of misery, relief from which is more difficult than any thing that ever before presented itself to the human mind, and relief from which, without a *terrible shock*, is as impossible as it is for us to arrest the seasons of the year.

Not only must things *go back*; not only must the "Lord of the Soil," as in the case of the above-supposed village, lose his estate; but, without *wise measures*, and great and bold measures too, the loss of the Lord's estate will by no means be the *end of the consequences* of the false-money system; for, observe, the *Debt* to the Fund-lords will remain as great *after they have the lands* as it is now! Twice as much is due to them as the land would sell for! Where did they *get the money* to lend? They lent *no money*! This matter I have to settle with Messrs. Baring, Ricardo, Grenfell, the Carrington Smiths, the Maberleys, and others. But, for the present, it is enough to know, that the Fund-lords demand twice as much as the net rental of all the land, all the houses, mines and canals! Of course, the land alone will not pay them; and, indeed, they will have that out of their mere gains in the way of interest and of rise in the value of money. Then the lands will still continue, though in new hands, to be charged with the interest of the Debt; but, the *labour* will also continue charged with that interest.

Thus, then, if there be not a *total change of the system*: in short, if this Debt be not, by some means or other, put an end to, it is impossible for the nation to *revive*. Prosperity cannot exist in a nation, where the drones fatten and the bees starve. Your poor devils of masters, who also are at their wit's end, and who are now justly punished for the support which the greater part of them have given to the system, are mere moths and butterflies in the creation of Paper-Money. They may give you their whole fortunes without arresting your miseries for six months. Their stock in trade is daily falling in value. They are daily poorer and poorer without hardly knowing how or why. In short they share in the distress to be endured by all, the tax-eaters excepted. Prosperity! Are we *waiting* for this? Come to London, this wen-headed metropolis. Here, at this very moment, there are not less perhaps than *ten thousand new houses building*! The foundation of 500 is laid at Islington alone! What! Is not this *prosperity*? Can the nation, to which this metropolis belongs, be in *distress and decay*? Oh, yes! It can, and it is; and these very buildings are a proof of it. These buildings are for the *drones*. They are for those to live in who consume the earnings of the bees. Mr. ALEXANDER BARING is, they say in the news-papers, about to build a mansion in Piccadilly, to surpass those of any of the nobles. He has bought the house and land there, which belongs to *Lady Bath*. I hope he will call it *Scrip-Castle*. In the

country he has the estate, park and mansion that was *Lord Northington's*, while his brother has close by, one that was the *Duke of Bedford's*. This is the way the thing works. These are the fruits of the Paper-System.

London and its surrounding villages consumes more than half the food raised in England; I mean the food *fit for human beings*. Is it trade and commerce that bring these eaters together to consume? No: for go to the docks, and you will find that commerce is half gone. The eaters come to eat taxes, without producing any thing. It is the drones that assemble here to live upon the honey collected by the bees. You, my friends, are a part of those bees; and, therefore, I pray you to cast aside the councils of cant and folly, and look steadily at the real causes of your distress and decline.

As to the removal of those causes, nothing can effect it but a *Reform of the House of Commons*; nothing can effect it but men, who will not vote immense sums annually to *French emigrants* and for *Secret Services*; men who will not support *Barracks* and *Standing Armies*; men who dare to face the "*monster of consumption*." I am aware, that you will say, what are we to do to get that Reform? And my answer is, that, at present, you can do nothing. The Landlords have taken care to bind you fast. You can hardly move, or open your lips, in favour of that ONLY measure that can do us any real good. But, you can abstain from adopting error; you can abstain from calling upon those Landlords to assist you in

ruining your poor wretches of masters; you can abstain from giving countenance to the enemies of us all. You can, in short, go to the parish, where you have law on your side, and let things work *its way*.

Pray, look at the thing. See what a turmoil it is in. See what a war of opinions and principles. Babel never witnessed greater confusion. Does not all this clearly portend a *something*, which, perhaps, it would not be perfectly safe to describe, even in the way of warning? Must not *something* arise out of all this warfare of all the elements of confusion and destruction? Believe not, my friends, that the drain upon your labour can by any human means be rendered *perpetual*. Believe not, that it can by any power on earth be made to continue for many years. The nation, mighty as it is, has been bound down little by little, by the hands of false money makers; but, it must and will burst the ties.

Even at this moment the supporters of the system tremble. They have a fearful looking-forward. All their measures falter. They would fain make believe that they are *stout*; but, while their voice is big, their hearts sink within them. We are to have gold, they say, *instead of one-pound notes*, in May. God be praised! Let but *that* come, and stick by us, and all will *soon be right*. I am told, that *two* of the Bank Directors have *resigned* recently, and I am also told, which, indeed, I can readily believe, that this a *very extraordinary thing*! This is a good symptom. It indicates a good deal. Therefore,

wait, not "till Providence send you food," for Providence works not partially; but, go to the parish for relief; go where the law bids you go; make the best bargain you can with your masters; and wait for the famous CASTLEREAGH'S "General working of events."

In the meanwhile, and during this waiting, abstain, if possible, from every exciseable commodity except salt: that you must have for health's sake. Strong drink you need not; but, it is, on the contrary, your duty to abstain from it. Roasted Wheat is *better* than coffee, or tea, and costs less than two-pence a pound; and sugar may be dispensed with. I use none of these things: and I sit at the table as many hours in the week as any of you do at your looms. Make the most of every thing. If your wives be as *cleanly* as the women of Lancashire, they must be good wives. And, if you be *sober*; if you trust more to industry and care than to "inward light;" if you do not mistake the effect of spiritous liquors for the workings of an invisible spirit; and, if you apply the *weekly pennies* to the purchase of cow's milk, instead of laying them out on that "milk which the lips of the saints dis-til;" (the modern Saints, I mean) if you thus act, though you will still suffer, for awhile, a great deal more than you ought, you will find, I hope, a great mitigation of your sufferings.

If, by any chance, some amongst you should *save* any thing from your earnings, let it be in *metal money*, and keep it by you. Put it into no *funds*, no

*saving banks*, no *societies*, no *common stock*; for, all these *must*, at last, rest upon the *Paper System*, than which a cobweb is not more fragile. As soon as gold gets about, try to get a bit of it; and, if you succeed, *keep it as the apple of your eye*. We must all have stockings still, of some price or other, and you will get *something*. A bit of *silver*, though only a *sixpence*, will be of great value ere long. Lay even that by if you possibly can. Nay, let not a penny, or a farthing, go without pressing necessity. But, mind, keep all *metal*. If you get a pound note, change it *instantly*. Let it not remain in your hut for an hour. It is the symbol of the curse upon England. All yearly servants, who save a little money, ought to get it into gold or silver as soon as possible. This is the legal money of the kingdom; this alone is "good and law'ul money," as it is called by the law: it is the *king's coin*, and it is that, in which alone, there can be security for his subjects.

Not only *keep* what coin you can, but, do not let any one see it, or know that you have it. You will see a day come, and that very shortly, when a shilling will buy you *thirty pounds or forty pounds of flour*! You will see the day, when ten pounds will be a *little fortune*. They say, that the Bank is to pay its one-pound notes in gold, *next month*, mind! Cut off the exciseable articles; stick to the *bread*, and *meat* if you can get it; or, you may do pretty well with *milk and bread* for a while. Water costs nothing, and I find that and water quite

good enough for me in the way of drink. Why not *bake your own bread*? Seven pounds of flour make nearly ten pounds of bread; and these seven pounds of flour you can get for *fifteen-pence*. You have fuel cheap; and I will, in my next, tell you how to *make yeast*, as good, or better, than you can buy, and will not cost you a *farthing a batch*. Come, come, then! Pluck up, a little. Let us see what we can do; and we can do a great deal, in this way, at least, if we do but *try*, and try with a resolution to succeed if possible.

We can do nothing but this. The Landlords have us down, tied hand and foot, and muzzled. But, we can still take care of ourselves, during this grand "*General working of events*." The Ministers appear resolved to push the Landlords from the wall, in which we are bound to wish them success. The former are working double tides to get *another Corn Bill*. There is a "*Grand Committee of Agriculture*" constantly sitting in London, which is nothing short of an organized body of *delegates*, whose object it is to procure laws to make *corn dear*, and *rents high*. The object will fail, however, even though the laws were to be passed. The state of *other nations* is such as to set all these schemes at defiance; and, therefore, all that such laws can do is to ruin some *more* merchants, manufacturers, and ship-owners, without affording any aid to the farmers and Landlords. These, you will perceive, are not pushing for a *repeal of Peel's Bill*! Oh, no! Wise and disinterested men! They

like to have their rents in hard *cash*: they want money to be at a *high value*; and, at the same time, they want *high prices*, and *low poor-rates*! Brave and sensible gentlemen! But, my friends, they are fairly caught in their own trap!

Pray, then, be quiet spectators of this interesting, this hope inspiring scene. You remember how clearly I foretold all these things long ago; how I bid our suffering friends, *Johnstone*, *Drummond* and *Bazuley* be of good cheer in their prison; how I told them, that they would see, *by the time they came out*, their enemies involved in troubles greater than theirs. I now bid you be of good cheer; I beseech you to follow my advice; and, if you remain unconvinced by my arguments, I beg you to believe, that there is not a man in the world who more sincerely participates in all your sorrows than

your faithful friend,  
WM. COBBETT.

P. S. The times are full of interest. There is hardly a night passes, in the Honourable House and amongst our Faithful Representatives, which does not bring forth matter, on which I dwell with delight. I read the debates over and over again, as young fellows do the dear and unintelligible scrawls that they get from their sweethearts; and, like them, too, the greater the difficulty in comprehending, the more am I enamoured of the thing. I love the charming repetitions; they say and say and say and say, and I doat on the sweet simplicity of the ideas: in short, one Register does not get out of



my hand, than I long to be at another. My next is a Letter to the "Great Young Statesman" Mr. PEEL, whose prompter (thanks to a correspondent) I found in a dunderheaded *Doctor of the University of Oxford!* A very suitable source of a measure that has thrown the system into hystericks! Aye, aye; let her fall by the hands of her former supporters.—I have just this moment (Thursday) read, that the *Board of Agriculture is to be abolished.* It was high time! This thing, which was established by Pitt, amidst his wanton waste, has cost the nation, in real money, *more than a hundred thousand pounds.* Sir JOHN SINCLAIR, who was the hatcher of it, was a driveller in agriculture as well as politics. But, this thing has been very *mischievous* to the nation. Its *present Secretary*, WEBB HALL, who appears to be as brazen and as ignorant a man as ever existed, has been the *organizer and discipliner* of the "*Grand Agricultural body of Delegates,*" now sitting in London. It was high time to stifle a pest like this. I thank the Ministers for doing it; and I am, besides, pleased with the thing, as a sign that they mean to push the "*Lords of the Soil*" to extremity, in which, mind you my friends, they must have all the support that *we* can give them! Never mind, *who* they are, or what they have *done* to us. I would support even *Sidmouth* in an enterprize like *this.* Let us have *gold*, and we will soon have *Reform.*

## COBBETT'S PUBLICATIONS.

THE LAST VOLUME OF THE REGISTER (Vol. 38) is now complete, bound in boards, *price* Seven SHILLINGS. It begins with the *New Year's gift to the farmers.* It contains the *Sermon to the Good Methodists*; the first three *Letters to Mr. Peel*; and several other papers, which may be useful at this time, when THE SYSTEM is in its agony. The Volume has a Table of Contents and an Index.—COBBETT'S MONTHLY RELIGIOUS TRACTS. The two first Numbers are out. The first, "*Na-both's Vineyard; or, God's vengeance against hypocrisy and cruelty.*" The second, "*The Sin of Drunkenness in Kings, Priests and People.*" Each of these Numbers has gone through several large editions, and the work makes the "*Tract Society*" tremble for the fate of its *veritable trash.* Cant and rant cannot make head against plain common sense. The price of the "*Religious Tract*" is *three pence.* Many persons have expressed a wish that the Tract came out *more frequently*; but, at present, this would not be convenient to the author. He must have time for other things. While he neglects not the "*mint and cummin,*" he must attend to the "*weightier matters of the law.*" While he fails not to write his Monthly Tracts, he must not forget his *Weekly Duty* towards the *System*, especially now that Corruption herself is at her wit's end. The *Six Acts* make an exception in favour of "*Religious Publications*"; and, the author thought it hard, if he could not get his nose, at any rate, into the privileged class.—COBBETT'S GRAMMAR, a new and neat edition, price 2s. 6d., bound in boards. It was intended for the use of young persons in general, and especially for the use of soldiers, sailors, apprentices and plough boys; but, the author has discovered, (in rather an odd manner) that it is in *great vogue* amongst "*statesmen*"; and, God knows, it was not before it was *wanted by them!*—COBBETT'S YEAR'S RESIDENCE IN AMERICA, a thick volume in Octavo, 10s. bound in boards. Very useful for those who want to know what America *really is.*—A New Edition of PAPER AGAINST GOLD, that complete history and

exposure of the mystery, of the Bank, the Funds and the Paper-Systems. Price *five shillings*, bound in boards.—In THE PRESS, the *Preliminary Part of Paper against Gold*, containing the articles written by the author on the subject of the *Sponge*, before the date of Paper against Gold. In these articles, the *wiping off of the whole of the Debt* is maintained to be *just*, if necessary to the happiness of the nation; and, though the Landlords seem not to dare to attempt it, that does not alter the nature of the thing. The author is satisfied, that it must be done *at last*, though the "Lords of the Soil" will, probably, lose the soil first.—Also IN THE PRESS, a thing that is a great favourite with the author: "The *AMERICAN GARDENER*; or, a treatise on the situation, soil, fencing and laying-out of Gardens; on the making and managing of hot-beds and green-houses; and on the Propagation and Cultivation of the several sorts of Table-Vegetables, Herbs, Fruits and Flowers." The author promised this work to his good and kind neighbours in America. It was principally written in that country; and would have been finished there, had it not been for *Peel's Bill*, to witness the effects of which made him hasten away home. Thanks to MR. PEELE, the author set off for dear Old England in November; for, if it had not been for that Bill, the author would have remained 'till spring, and then he would have lost the inexpressible pleasure of seeing Her Majesty arrive! Peel's Bill brought him away with his work in an unfinished state. It is now finished; and, though it be the "*American Gardener*," he thinks it contains matter more than worth the purchase money to an English reader, who takes delight in gardening; and, besides the Horticultural information, the book contains the best possible account of the *climate*, and of things connected with the climate, of the country, for the use of which it is written.—In answer to enquiries about the *FRENCH GRAMMAR*, the author begs the public to consider a little what have been his labours since his return to England! This is a work, which he cannot suffer to go out of his hands with a single doubt in his mind as to any part of it.

It would, however, have been ready for the press before this time, had it not been for the last-mentioned work, which he had *promised* to so many kind friends. All that he can say, is, that he thinks to have the *French Grammar* out during the summer. But, let it be borne in mind that the main business of his life is to watch the motions of *Corruption*. He has been dogging her steps for many years. She has, now-and-then, turned upon him and given him a bite; but, now that he sees the bloody monster hemmed up in a corner, looking about her in vain for an out-let whereby to escape; when he sees her sides heave and her jaws filled with foam, he cannot quit her for long at a time. Expire she must; but, she must not expire without a last blow from him.

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